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The Teenage Witch

#9

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9 780671 038328



ISBN 0-671-03832-X



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"You look just like Puss in Boots," Ally told Salem after he had finished the story.

Salem puffed his furry chest proudly. "We *are* both good-looking," he agreed.

"But you're not wearing little leather boots," Ally said. "I can get you some of those. I have a doll that wears them."

Salem growled.

"If you don't put them on, I'll tell Aunt Zelda that you ruined her experiment," Ally threatened.

Salem had no choice. He walked over, sat on Ally's lap, and stuck out one of his paws.

But instead of putting the boot on Salem's paw, Ally grabbed the cat around the waist. She lifted him up and dropped him right onto the magical storybook.

"See ya later, sucker!" she said.

Suddenly, Salem found himself falling down a long, dark hole.

"Heyyyyyy!" Salem cried out. "Who turned out the lights?"

Sabrina, the Teenage Witch™
Salem's Tails™

- #1 CAT TV
Salem Goes to Rome
- #2 Teacher's Pet
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Sabrina The Teenage Witch[®] Salem's Tails[™]

HAPPILY EVER AFTER

Nancy Krulik

Based upon the characters in Archie Comics

And based upon the television series

Sabrina, The Teenage Witch

Created for television by Nell Scovell

Developed for television by Jonathan Schmock

Illustrated by Mark Dubowski



Published by POCKET BOOKS

New York London Toronto Sydney Singapore

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A Minstrel Book published by
POCKET BOOKS, a division of Simon & Schuster Inc.
1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020

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Salem Quotes taken from the following episodes:

"A Doll's Story" written by Carrie Honigblum & Renee Phillips

"Sabrina and the Beast" written by Danita Jones

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For information address Pocket Books, 1230 Avenue
of the Americas, New York, NY 10020

ISBN: 0-671-03832-X

First Minstrel Books printing November 1999

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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*For the brave Sir Ian and
the lovely Lady Amanda*



I do love a happy ending.
—Salem



HAPPILY EVER AFTER

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF HENRY THE SEVENTH

BY JOHN HALLAM

ESQ. OF LINCOLN'S INN

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON: PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAULS CHURCH-YARD, 1798

AND SOLD BY ALL THE BOOKSELLERS

IN GREAT BRITAIN

AND IN THE NORTHERN PART OF IRELAND

AND IN THE WEST INDIES

AND IN THE EAST INDIES

AND IN THE NORTHERN PART OF AFRICA

AND IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF AFRICA

AND IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF ASIA

AND IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF AMERICA

AND IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF AUSTRALIA

AND IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF ANTARCTICA

Chapter 1

Would you like some tea, Your Majesty?" Sabrina Spellman asked as she passed a tiny teacup across the table.

"Yes, and lots of cookies, too," Sabrina's cousin Ally replied.

Sabrina smiled. She hadn't been to a make-believe tea party in years. So far, baby-sitting for her little cousin wasn't too bad. Of course, it helped that Ally no longer had magic powers. Back when she did, Ally had been a bundle of trouble!



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Sabrina was very familiar with magic. Sabrina was a witch. So were her aunts, Hilda and Zelda, with whom Sabrina lived. Ally had been a witch once, too, until her mother had fallen in love with Sabrina's plumber and told him that she had magic powers. That would have been fine, except that Sabrina's plumber was a human. Telling humans about your powers was a big no-no in the witch world. When the plumber told someone else that she was a witch, Ally's mother and her two daughters lost their magic powers.

When she was a witch, Ally was capable of doing just about anything. Once she actually turned Sabrina's boyfriend, Harvey Kinkle, into a puppy, and re-named him Cuddles! But Sabrina had gotten her back for that one. As punish-

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ment, Sabrina made Ally clean up the puddle Cuddles had left on the back porch.

Becoming mortal had, in some ways, been good for Ally. It had taken her a while to get used to doing things like getting dressed and turning the TV on the human way. But the lack of magic powers seemed to have improved her attitude—at least when she was kept busy, like now. Ally loved tea parties, and so she was being very sweet. But Sabrina knew that if Ally became bored, or didn't get her way, she would go straight back to being the same bratty Ally she was before. In that way, Sabrina figured Ally was just like any other first grader.

Back when the two girls were witches, Ally was nothing compared to her big sister, Amanda. Ally usually used her



Salem's Tails

magic to entertain herself—not to be mean. Amanda entertained herself by being mean! There was just no pleasing her. Amanda's favorite saying was "I love seeing the fear in their eyes." So, all things considered, Sabrina figured that if she had to be home baby-sitting on a Saturday night, it was better to be stuck with Ally than with Amanda.

Sabrina placed a sugar cookie on Ally's plate. Then she popped one in her own mouth.

Brrring! Just then, the telephone rang. Sabrina jumped up from the table and leaped for the phone. She almost tripped over the family cat, Salem.

"Hey, watch the tail!" Salem shouted at Sabrina.

Sabrina wasn't at all surprised to hear her cat shout at her. He did it all the

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time. When it came to the Spellman household, a talking cat was the least of the strange things that happened.

"Hello," Sabrina said into the phone.

"Hi, Sabrina!"

Sabrina smiled. "Hi, Harvey. What's up?"

"My dad just finished exterminating the Beacon Concert Hall," Harvey explained. "As he was leaving, the manager gave him two tickets to the Crushing Oranges concert tonight. I know you really like them, so—"

"Like them?!" Sabrina exclaimed. "The Crushing Oranges are my absolute favorite rock group!"

"So do you want to go with me?"

"Of course I want to go with you. I can be ready in five minutes, and . . ." Sabrina stopped mid-sentence. What was she



Salem's Tails

saying? She couldn't go anywhere. She had to baby-sit for Ally. *Unless . . .*

"Harvey, I'll meet you outside my house in five!" she declared.

As Sabrina hung up the phone, she reached over and scratched Salem behind the ears.

"Oooo. That feels so good," Salem purred. "What do you want?"

"Why should I want anything?" Sabrina asked him. "Can't I just scratch my favorite kitty behind the ears if I want to?"

"You could," Salem agreed. "But you never have before. So what's the deal?"

"All right," Sabrina admitted. "Harvey just called, and he's got two tickets to the Crushing Oranges concert. I need you to baby-sit for Ally."

Salem licked his lips. He knew how

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much Sabrina loved the Crushing Oranges—not to mention Harvey. He had Sabrina right where he wanted her. “So what’s in it for me?” he asked her slyly.

Sabrina thought for a moment. “I’ll let you unravel all the wool in my new pink sweater,” she offered.

“And?”

“And I’ll scratch you behind the ears every day for a week,” Sabrina added.

“And?” Salem asked again.

Sabrina sighed. “I promise not to tell Aunt Hilda that you’re the one who knotted up all the strings on her violin. And I won’t tell Aunt Zelda who added three milliliters of heavy cream to the test tube that held her molecular combustion experiment.”

Salem nodded. That seemed like a fair



Salem's Tails

trade. Besides, Salem kind of liked Ally. He knew where she was coming from. It was hard to go from being a witch to not having any powers. Salem knew all about that. He had been a warlock—a male witch—once himself. But then he'd gotten greedy and tried to use his powers to take over the world. Salem didn't think that was such a big deal. But the Witches' Council sure did. They sentenced him to live one hundred years as a cat. Later, they added fifty more years to his sentence for bad behavior.

"All right, I'll sit for Ally," Salem said finally.

"Oooo! Thank you, Salem," Sabrina said as she took off her paper crown and handed it to Ally. Then she waved her finger and changed the flowered dress

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she was wearing for the tea party into a black miniskirt and pink top.

"Hey, where are you going?" Ally barked at Sabrina.

"To a rock concert with Harvey."

"You can't go. You're supposed to be baby-sitting me."

"Salem's going to watch you," Sabrina assured her.

Ally was mad. She had been having fun at her tea party. She didn't like it when people stopped her fun. "You're not leaving me alone with a cat. If you try to, I'll tell my mom!"

Sabrina gulped. That was not good. She could get in big trouble for not being responsible. Still, the Crushing Oranges were the coolest group ever! She just *had* to be at the show. There was just one thing to do. Sabrina would have to bribe Ally.



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"I know something fun you and Salem can do together," she assured her little cousin. Sabrina went over to the bookshelf and pulled down a huge book of fairy tales. "You can read this book. It was my favorite when I was your age."

Ally sat on the couch and folded her arms across her chest. "Read a book for fun? That sounds boring," she said.

Sabrina thought for a moment. Then she pointed her finger at the book. *Whoosh!* There was a flash of light, and then, when Sabrina opened the book to the first page, the prince and princess in the picture came to life. They danced joyously across the title page.

"Now it's a *magic* book," Sabrina told Ally.

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Ally opened the book to another page. There she saw Pinocchio actually being swallowed by the whale. "Cool!" she exclaimed.

Sabrina breathed a sigh of relief. Then she turned her attention to Salem and began rattling off baby-sitting instructions. "Okay, all the emergency numbers are by the phone in the kitchen. She's allowed to have just one more snack before bed. Don't forget to tell her to brush her teeth, and . . . oh, maybe I shouldn't go. Ally is my responsibility!"

"Do you think I can't handle one little girl? She doesn't even have magic powers any more. This will be a piece of cake." Salem pointed one black paw toward the door. "Now get out of here. And don't forget our deal!"

As the door slammed behind Sabrina,



Salem's Tails

Salem perched himself on a chair across the table from Ally. "So what do you want to do, kid?"

Ally placed a teeny paper crown on Salem's head. Then she pulled the bib off her baby doll and tied it like a cape around Salem's neck.

"You're the prince, I'm the princess, and we're having a tea party," Ally said.

Salem was about to complain—until he spied the cookies on the table. "Okay," he said, as he reached up and grabbed a cookie from the plate.

How bad can this be? Salem thought as he bit into a yummy chocolate chip.

Chapter 2

Before long, all the cookies were gone—and Salem had lost any interest in playing tea party. “What do you want to do now? Go to sleep?” he asked Ally hopefully.

“Soon,” Ally replied. “But not yet.” Ally was the champion of not going to sleep. She had a million tricks up her sleeve. Sometimes she asked for lots of glasses of water and then went to the bathroom about a thousand times.



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Sometimes she just hid under the stairs. Tonight, she decided to steal an idea from her big sister, Amanda. Amanda always said that the best way to stay up late was to get rid of the baby-sitter. Once, when Sabrina was baby-sitting for Amanda, the girl actually turned Sabrina into a doll and kept her prisoner in a toy box—just so she could stay up later!

But Ally couldn't turn Salem into anything now that she'd lost her powers. So instead, Ally grabbed Sabrina's magical storybook and handed it to Salem. "First you have to read a bedtime story to me. How about one of these?"

"Here's a good one," Salem said as he turned the pages with his paw. "*Puss In Boots*. I always like a tale about a smart cat."

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Salem began to read the story about the cat who belonged to a poor man. The cat was much smarter than the man—which Salem found perfectly logical. Using his remarkable intelligence, the cat was able to trick the king of the land into thinking his poor master was a rich landowner, worthy of marrying the king's beloved daughter. By the end of the tale the cat and his master lived in a wonderful castle and owned more riches than anyone could ever imagine. Salem could not have written a better ending for the story if he had tried.

"You look just like Puss in Boots," Ally told Salem after he had finished reading.

Salem puffed his furry chest proudly. "We *are* both good-looking," he agreed.

"But you're not wearing little leather



Salem's Tails

boots," Ally said. "I can get you some of those. I have a doll that wears them."

Ally reached into her pile of dolls and picked up one that was wearing a pair of white go-go boots. "Here you go," she said as she reached for Salem.

Salem growled. Enough was enough. Wearing a crown and a cape was one thing. But he was not putting on a pair of dolly boots. *No way!*

"If you don't put them on, I'll tell Aunt Zelda that you ruined her experiment," Ally threatened.

Salem had no choice. He walked over, sat on Ally's lap, and stuck out one of his paws.

But instead of putting the boot on Salem's paw, Ally grabbed the cat around the waist. She lifted him up and

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dropped him right onto the magical storybook.

“See ya later, sucker!” she said.

Suddenly, Salem found himself falling down a long, dark hole.

“Heyyyyyy!” Salem cried out. “Who turned out the lights?”



Chapter 3

T*hump.*

Salem landed with a thud on a patch of green grass. He blinked his eyes as he adjusted to the bright sunlight. Then he stood up and looked around.

Salem had obviously landed in some sort of garden. But he'd never seen a garden like this! All around him there were giant mushrooms, each one about the size of a car. And there were huge sunflowers, too, standing almost as high as a

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small house. *Wow*, he thought. *I wonder what kind of water these people use!*

“What kind of weed is that down there?” one of the sunflowers asked her neighbor.

Salem looked around. He didn’t see any weeds. In fact, the lawn seemed perfectly groomed.

“It appears to be moving,” another sunflower remarked. “I’ve never seen an all-black weed before.”

“Moving? All-black? I think they’re talking about me!” Salem exclaimed. That made Salem angry. Weeds were ordinary. Weeds were annoying. Weeds were pests. Salem was none of those things. He was a cat of good breeding.

“Look, you hay-fever-carrying petal brains!” he shouted up toward the flowers. “I am not a weed! I’m a cat.”



Salem's Tails

But the flowers didn't believe him. They just shook their petals and covered Salem in piles of yellow pollen.

"Achoo!" Salem sneezed as he ran away from the sunflowers.

Salem wandered over to another part of the lawn. There, he saw some rose bushes. Luckily, the roses did not seem as angry as the sunflowers had. In fact, the roses didn't seem to notice Salem at all.

Salem was amazed by the roses. They were the reddest flowers he'd ever seen. "Wait until I tell Zelda about these roses," he said aloud. "Her garden club would be so jealous!"

But as Salem got closer to the flowers, he discovered that the roses were not red at all. They were really white roses that had been painted red.

As Salem was examining the roses, he

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heard the *boom, boom, boom* of a drum, accompanied by some wild singing and a guitar screeching. The sounds seemed to be coming from behind the rose bushes.

Salem peeked behind the painted flowers. There, he discovered a chorus of caterpillars who were singing and dancing to the music of a heavy metal band of spiders.

“Whoa!” Salem exclaimed. “Those bugs sure know how to party!” Salem began to swing his tail back and forth to the beat. “Rock on!” he shouted.

“Get out of my way!” a small voice suddenly warned Salem.

The black cat stepped to the left—just in time to miss being bowled over by a beaver who was all rolled up like a ball and spinning across the lawn.



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Salem was about to ask the beaver what he was doing when he heard a loud, shrill woman's voice blaring from behind a hedge.

"Off with his head!" the voice shouted. "Off with his head!"

Salem wasn't sure whose head was about to be cut off—but he wasn't taking any chances. He quickly climbed up to the top branch of a tree. He looked down from his high perch and watched as the Queen of Hearts ran past. She held a croquet mallet in her hands.

"Off with his head!" the Queen yelled out again to no one in particular.

Salem shook his head in disbelief. "Where am I?" he wondered aloud as he hopped down from the tree.

"I'll tell you where you are—as soon

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as you take off that ridiculous outfit,” someone said from a spot high in the trees. “You’re giving all of us cats a really bad name walking around like that.”

Salem looked up into the tree. *Strange, he thought, there was no one else in the tree just a second ago, and now there’s a pink-and-yellow striped cat up there.*

Salem blushed under his black fur as he knocked the crown from his head and wriggled out of the cape. He knew he must have looked ridiculous.

“Much better,” the striped cat said. “Although I’m sure I’ve seen much more attractive cats.”

Ordinarily, that would have made Salem hiss. But not now. This cat was his only hope in finding out where he was and how he could get home. “It’s



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nice to meet someone of my own kind," Salem said simply.

The cat laughed. "I'm not *your* kind," she said. "I'm a Cheshire Cat. I can disappear at will—like magic." To prove it, the cat faded away slowly, starting with her tail, and working her way down her body. Before long, only the cat's smile was left.

Salem sighed. He missed the days when he could disappear at will.

"You must have fallen down the rabbit hole, because you're in Wonderland," the Cheshire Cat's mouth explained. "That's the only way you can get here."

"Wonderland! Oh no! Ally must have dropped me into that magic fairy tale book," Salem exclaimed with a sigh.

Salem knew from experience that

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being dropped into a magic book was not a good thing. The last time something like this had happened, Sabrina had put a spell on her history textbook. Salem had fallen into the book and wound up spending a full day helping to solve problems for George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and George Washington Carver, before Sabrina finally came home from school and rescued him. Salem was determined not to go through something like that again!

"How can I get home from here?" he asked the Cheshire Cat.

"Obviously, you'll have to go back the way you came. Just climb up the rabbit hole."

"Thanks for the advice!" Salem shouted as the last of the Cheshire Cat's



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teeth faded away. He turned and started off for the rabbit hole. But before he could take even one step, the Queen of Hearts returned.

"Where is my ball?" the Queen demanded. "Has anyone seen it?"

"Isn't that it, right near the tree?" Ally's giggling voice shouted from up above the book.

Salem looked around. *What is Ally talking about?* he wondered. *There's no ball by the tree. The only thing near this tree is me.*

Oddly enough, the Queen did not seem surprised to hear a voice coming from above. She simply walked over to the tree. "Ah! There's my ball!" the Queen declared. She stood over Salem and raised her mallet high. *Thwack!* The mallet connected directly with


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Salem's bottom. The cat went flying in the air.

"Somebody help me!" Salem cried out. He could hear Ally giggling as he soared over the hedge and past the giant mushrooms.



Chapter 4

uch!" Salem exclaimed as he landed headfirst on a hard, wooden floor. "Whoever said cats always land on their feet needs his head examined."

Salem looked up. He could see Ally's face staring down at him. "Get me out of here!" he demanded.

Ally shook her head. "I can't. I don't have any magic powers, remember?"

"Then how did you get me in here?" Salem demanded.

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"The *book* is magic. You just landed on it and fell right in. So you'll have to find your own way out, or wait for Sabrina to come home and help you."

"I did not just land on it. You *threw me* into it. Oh, never mind!" Salem sighed. There was no sense wasting his time arguing with Ally. He had to find his way back to the Alice in Wonderland story so he could climb up that rabbit hole. And when he did, Ally was going to be sorry!

Salem wandered around the corner and into a small room. The only light seemed to be coming from a single window near the ceiling, and yet the room seemed so bright. As Salem looked around he could see that the sunlight streaming through the window was being reflected by something on the floor. Salem went over to investigate.



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There were large balls of yarn piled up in the center of the room. But not just any yarn. This yarn was made of solid gold. *Golden balls of yarn.* Wow! This was heaven for a cat who loved to read the *Wall Street Journal!*

"I must have been hurt worse than I thought," Salem said to himself. "I'm seeing things!" He rolled around wildly in a pile of silky golden yarn. "But if this is a dream, I don't ever want to wake up!"

Suddenly, a young girl's voice called out to him from across the room. "Get out of here. You'll ruin the golden yarn. That will make the king angry."

Salem stopped rolling long enough to look at the maiden. She was beautiful, with long golden curls and big blue eyes. She was dressed in a simple cotton gown. Her feet and hands moved

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quickly as she worked at a spinning wheel. On one side of the wheel was a pile of straw. As the girl spun the straw, it turned into gold. Salem was very excited. He could smell another get-rich-quick scheme coming.

“Hey! How do you do that?” Salem asked the maiden.

The girl jumped up out of her seat and moved toward the far wall. “A talking cat? Leave me be, please. You must be bewitched.”

Salem sighed. “I wish,” he murmured. “But those days are gone.”

The girl stared at Salem with frightened eyes. “Go away, you strange creature!” she cried out.

“You’re sitting here in an underground sewing room spinning straw into gold, and you think a talking cat is strange?”



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Get with the program—this is a fairy tale. Anything can happen,” Salem replied.

The maiden slowly sat back down by her wheel. “You’ve got a point,” she said.

“Now about this straw into gold thing,” Salem said. “How exactly did you say you did that?”

The maiden laughed. “I didn’t,” she replied. “Actually, I’m not sure how it happens. It all started when my father lied to the king and told him I knew how to spin straw into gold—which I of course did not. But the king believed him, and locked me in this sewing room. The king said that if I could really spin straw into gold, he would take me for his bride. But if I couldn’t, my father and I would be banished from the kingdom forever.”

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It was a sad story, but Salem wasn't really paying attention. He was still focusing on the amount of money he could make if he learned the secret of spinning straw into gold. "But you're definitely spinning straw into gold," he remarked, pointing to the huge balls of gold.

The maiden nodded. "This little man came into the sewing room and offered to help me if I traded him something of value. I gave him the locket my mother had given me. It was all I had. But it wasn't enough. I had to promise him my firstborn child. Then he made the spinning wheel magical."

"You don't *really* have to give him your child, do you?" Salem asked her.

The girl nodded. "I do," she admitted. "A deal is a deal. Of course, there is one



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way out of it. The funny little man said I could keep my firstborn if I guessed his name correctly. I've tried lots of names—Sheboygan, Flaggidyfoop, even Dweeblefedder. But none of them were his name.

"Have you tried Rumpelstiltskin?" Salem asked the girl.

To Salem's surprise, she nodded. "It was the first name I tried," she told the cat. "Rumpelstiltskin has been one of the ten most popular names for centuries now. But it wasn't his name. Now I have only one more guess. If I don't choose the right name, he will take my baby when it is born."

Salem opened his mouth to speak, but he was interrupted as a small opening in the floorboards began to creak.

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"Here comes the little man. Quick, hide!" shouted the maiden.

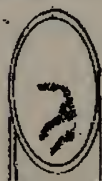
Salem did as he was told. He crouched behind a gigantic ball of golden yarn.

"So, kiddo, how's it going?" Salem heard a man's high-pitched voice ask. "Figure out my name yet?"

Salem perked his ears up high. He knew that voice from somewhere.

"Our little deal seems to be going pretty well," the man continued. "I found the answer to your problems. Now it's time for you to fulfill your part of the bargain."

Found? Bargain? That was it! Salem knew exactly where he'd heard that voice before. It was the troll whose job it was to find things and then trade for them. He was the one who had tried to



Salem's Tails

marry Sabrina. Salem did not like the guy at all. He decided to have a little fun with him.

"Meow!" Salem shouted in his best imitation of a real cat. He darted out into the little man's path.

"Aaahh! A black cat!" the troll shouted. "That's bad luck!" He ran away from Salem.

But Salem stayed close by—forcing the troll to run under a ladder to get out of the cat's way.

"Oh no! More bad luck!" the little man screeched.

"What's the matter, *Roland*?" Salem asked. "Don't you recognize me? I'm Salem."

Roland stopped right in his tracks. This was worse bad luck than he'd imagined.

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"Is your name Roland?" the maiden sweetly asked the little man.

Roland's eyes grew wide. "I'll get you for this, cat!" he shouted. He dove toward Salem.

But Salem was quick. He leaped out through a high window in the sewing room. Neither the maiden nor the troll noticed that Salem grabbed a ball of golden yarn in his mouth as he left.



Chapter 5

Salem wasn't sure what fairy tale he was going to wind up in next, but he was determined to come down on his feet this time. He placed all four of his paws in a landing position, and waited to free-fall onto the ground.

Sure enough, Salem had a smooth landing. He looked around and saw a few scraggly tomato plants, some pretty little flowers, and an old well. To the left, he could see a small cottage with a

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thatched roof. Salem looked to see if there were any people, animals, or trolls in the yard. Since he didn't see anyone, Salem decided this was the perfect time to check out just how much gold he had gotten away with.

Salem opened his mouth and spit out the ball of yarn. But the gold was no longer there. There was nothing but a small pile of hay at Salem's feet.

"Blech!" Salem exclaimed as he spit some pieces of straw from his mouth. "I should have known that Roland's magic wouldn't work if it was in the wrong story! Which reminds me—what fairy tale am I in now, anyway, Ally?"

Ally stared down at Salem and smiled. "That's for me to know and you to find out!" she laughed.



Salem's Tails

Obviously, Salem was not going to get any help from Ally, so he decided to do some exploring. As he padded quietly around the yard, Salem heard squeaking sounds. He looked down to see two tiny mice huddled nervously behind a rock.

"Relax," Salem told them. "I don't eat mice. I prefer caviar and tuna!"

The mice seemed relieved as they scurried away. But the very thought of food had made Salem hungry—as always. He walked into the cottage to see if there was anything to eat.

The inside of the cottage was small and the furniture was old, but the place was spotless. Someone had obviously taken great care with the housework. Salem didn't see any food, but he did discover a girl with long dark hair and green eyes. She was sitting by the fire-

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place, crying. Her clothes were ragged, with patches holding the skirt and blouse together. Her face was dirty, yet Salem could see that she was quite beautiful. There was a kindness in her eyes that was easy to recognize.

Salem walked over to her. The girl reached down and scratched Salem behind the ears. Salem purred with delight. *I could get to like this*, he thought.

"Well, kitty, I guess you're my prince charming tonight," the girl said tearfully. "Let me get you a saucer of cream."

Yes, I definitely could learn to live with this, Salem thought as he lapped up the sweet, fresh cream.

"Aaaachooo! Aaachooo!"

Salem's delightful snack was interrupted by two loud sneezes that seemed



Salem's Tails

to come out of nowhere. Suddenly, there was a burst of fire. When the smoke cleared, Salem discovered a woman in a beautiful yellow satin ball gown, sitting in the sink. She waved a star-shaped wand in the air.

“Oops!” the woman exclaimed. “I was aiming for that couch over there. I can’t get anything right when I sneeze. Aa-choo! Aachoo! Did I mention that I am allergic to cats?”

Salem’s back went up when he heard that. He hated when people claimed to be allergic to cats. It hurt his feelings. How would people feel if he said he was allergic to *them*?

The girl calmed Salem by petting his back softly. Then she turned her attention to the woman in the sink. “Who are you?”

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"Cinderella, I'm your fairy god-mother," the woman replied.

Salem snickered. He should have known. Humans were always thinking that fairies were sweet, kind creatures who helped grant wishes. But witches and warlocks knew that fairies were more likely to be bumbleres whose magic always seemed to go wrong.

This should be amusing, Salem thought to himself as he curled up on a chair to see what would happen next.

"I'm here to see that you get to the prince's ball in style," the fairy god-mother told Cinderella. "Now let's see, what should we work on first? How about your clothes? Now hold still, dear. With a little magic, I'll perform an amazing makeover. You won't even recognize yourself."



Salem's Tails

The fairy godmother waved her wand around and around. "Gibblety, scribblety, kaboom!" she called out.

Salem sighed. Fairies always made such big shows out of things that were really simple.

There was a flash of light, and then Cinderella's makeover was complete. The fairy godmother had been correct. Cinderella certainly would not have recognized herself. That's because she was dressed to go to the prince's ball in . . . *a hairy gorilla suit!*

"Oh dear, oh dear, that's just not right!" the fairy godmother cried out. "Aachoo! Aachoo!"

Quickly, the fairy waved her wand again. This time, the magic worked as she had planned. Cinderella was clothed in a beautiful silver-colored silk evening

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gown. On her head was a crown made of the finest silver, and laced with diamonds. She wore two tiny glass slippers on her delicate feet.

"Perfect, if I do say so myself," said the fairy godmother. "Now, we do have to get you to the ball in style. Grab that pumpkin for me, will you, dear?"

Cinderella went out into the garden. The fairy godmother and Salem followed close behind. Cinderella plucked a round, orange pumpkin from the vine and set it in the middle of the yard.

"Now watch this!" the fairy godmother said proudly. She waved her wand again and said, "Kaching, kachung, *kerchooo!*"

As soon as the fairy godmother sneezed, there was a huge burst of



Salem's Tails

smoke. Eventually the smoke disappeared. Now, instead of a pumpkin, Salem could see a brand-new, state-of-the-art *rowboat*!

"Oops," the fairy godmother said sheepishly. "Not quite what I had in mind. I'd better go for something simpler." She waved her wand again, and the rowboat turned into a pair of roller skates.

Cinderella looked nervously at her fairy godmother. "I don't mean to seem ungrateful," Cinderella said slowly, "but I don't know if . . ."

"You're right, dear, those will never work," the fairy godmother interrupted her. "They won't fit over your glass slippers."

Salem watched as the fairy godmother waved her wand once again. This time

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her magic had the desired effect. A grand coach stood where the pumpkin had once been.

"Now you need a fine footman to drive the coach," the fairy godmother told Cinderella. She looked around the yard. Her eyes landed on Salem. "Ah. This cat will do," she declared.

Salem was ready to run off as fast as his four feet would move. He had once ruled the world—or at least tried to. He wasn't about to let this freaky fairy godmother turn him into some sort of servant.

But then he thought about it. A footman was a human. And although he wouldn't have his powers back, Salem would be able to stand on two feet again. *At least I won't have fur balls any more,* Salem thought to himself.



Salem's Tails

Salem stayed perfectly still as the fairy godmother waved her wand around and around Salem's body. He didn't want anything to go wrong.

"Footman, fobble, floozee, flume," the fairy godmother chanted.

Then there was a giant burst of light. When the brightness faded, there stood Salem—just as he had been before. The fairy godmother's magic was not powerful enough to change the decree of the Witches' Council. When they had added fifty years onto his sentence, they'd made the spell even stronger. Now, not a fairy, or a leprechaun, or even a witch could turn Salem into a person.

But the fairy godmother did not know that. She just knew that her magic had not worked. "What is wrong with this wand?" the fairy godmother wondered

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aloud. "It must be broken." She shook the wand to the right. A flowerpot on the ledge burst into a hundred pieces. She shook the wand to the left. Pots and pans fell from the kitchen wall and went clanging to the floor. The fairy godmother held her wand up to the moonlight and examined it closely. A huge cloud formed overhead and began pouring down on Cinderella, the fairy godmother, and Salem. Salem bristled. If there was one thing he hated, it was a cold, sudden shower. When it came to water, the only thing Salem liked was a nice, warm bubble bath.

The fairy godmother turned the wand upside down and shook it hard. The ground burst wide open, and a giant dragon peered up from below the surface.



Salem's Tails

"That settles it!" Salem shouted. "I'm getting out of here before anything else goes wrong!"

Salem ducked out of the yard as quickly as he could and ran down the stone path. He had no idea where he was going, or in what story he was going to wind up next. All Salem knew was that he had to get away from that wacky fairy and her loose cannon of a wand!

Chapter 6

Salem felt as though he had been running for miles, although he knew that it really couldn't be that far. After all, the next fairy tale couldn't be more than five or six pages away, in either direction. That was part of the problem. There were a lot of fairy tales in the book. You didn't have to read them in order. So there was no way for Salem to know if at the moment he was in a story that came before *Alice in Wonderland*



Salem's Tails

in the book, or *after* it. At that very moment Salem could be running in the exact opposite direction of the way he wanted to go.

The only person who would know which way Salem should run was Ally. After all, she was the one who held the book—and therefore Salem's fate—in her hands.

"Ally, which way is *Alice in Wonderland*?" Salem shouted to her.

But Ally didn't respond. Salem looked up out of the book. Ally's face was no longer peering down at the pages. "Hey Ally! Where are you?" Salem called up again.

Once again, the cat listened for an answer, but all he could hear was the *thump, thump, bump* of a rock and roll drummer. Ally had obviously gotten

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bored with the magic fairy tale book. Now she was busy playing one of Sabrina's Crushing Oranges CDs on the stereo in Sabrina's room. The cat was on his own.

"Oh, when I get out of here, I'm really gonna give it to that kid!" Salem moaned as he sat down to rest.

Salem looked around for a clue as to what story he had landed in. One thing was for sure—wherever Salem was, it was *hot*. The sun was beating straight down on his head.

Salem looked around for a shady spot to take a break. But there were no trees in sight. There weren't any buildings or people around, either. Just miles and miles of golden sand. Salem had managed to run into a desert.

"Look at all this sand," Salem mut-



Salem's Tails

tered. "This place looks like one giant litter box."

In his younger days, back when he was still a warlock, Salem had spent quite a bit of time in the Arabian desert. He'd been friendly with a couple of the Egyptian kings called pharaohs—until one night when he'd tried to kiss Cleopatra. After that, Salem suddenly stopped being invited to all the good pyramid parties. Apparently Cleo was off limits to warlocks.

But Salem could still remember what desert life was like. The desert might be hot by day, but it cooled off at night. All Salem needed to do was find a place to hide out from the sun until night fell. Then he could continue on his search for the rabbit hole.

Salem wandered around the desert for

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a while until he found a small cave behind one of the mounds of sand. He crawled inside and lay down for a short rest. It was cool and dark inside the cave. Salem stretched out and prepared to take a nap. But just as he was about to shut his eyes, he spotted something shiny in the corner of the cave.

Salem could never resist a shiny object. He never knew when it might be something valuable like diamonds, gold coins, or a can of tuna fish. Salem padded over toward the shimmering light. He looked down to see what he had discovered.

"Rats!" he complained. "It's nothing but an old lamp."

Salem looked down at the lamp. He could see a blurred version of his reflection staring back at him. His coat was



Salem's Tails

matted, and he had bits of sand and straw all over him.

"Talk about a bad fur day," Salem sighed. He began to wash himself with his paws like a normal cat. It wasn't the best method of cleaning himself, but it would have to do for now.

"Aah, that's better," Salem said as he finished. He looked at his reflection in the lamp. He could barely make himself out with all the dust. Salem used his paw to wipe the lamp clean.

Suddenly there was a burst of green smoke. Salem leaped out of the way and tried to run from the cave.

"Hey, where ya goin'?" someone called to Salem. "You can't leave. I just got here."

Salem turned around to see a tall green man with a silk turban on his

Happily Ever After

head. "I'm your genie!" the man said. "Thanks for freeing me from that bottle. I've been stuck in there for five thousand years."

The genie ran over and kissed Salem on the cheek. Salem made a face. "Obviously you didn't have a toothbrush in there with you," Salem said. "Your breath stinks. Boy do I wish I had some mints."

"You got 'em!" the genie declared. He folded his arms and nodded his head. *Poof!* A mountain of red-and-white peppermints appeared at Salem's feet. "That's wish number one," the genie said.

"Huh?" Salem asked.

"Oh, did I forget to mention that for freeing me you get three wishes? Anything you want, master!" the genie explained.



Salem's Tails

For a minute, Salem was caught off guard. It had been a long time since anyone had called him master. He liked the sound of it.

"So, master, you heard any good jokes lately?" the genie asked, interrupting Salem's thoughts.

"No, I haven't," Salem answered.

"Well, how about this one?" the genie said. "What time is it when a sultan's elephant sits on your fence?"

Salem cocked his head. "I don't know."

"Time to get a new fence!" the genie told him, laughing hysterically.

Salem groaned. That was a really bad joke. "The last time I heard that one, I was riding my dinosaur—literally," he told the genie.

"What do you want? I've been in a

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bottle for five thousand years," the genie replied. "It's been hard to get my hands on any new material. I guess you've also heard the one about what time it is when your sundial says thirteen o'clock?"

Salem frowned. "Time to get a new sundial," he answered. "Look, let's forget about all this joking around. I still have two wishes left, right? So how about . . ." Salem stopped in midsentence as he watched the genie poking at his ear. "What are you doing?" Salem asked him.

"Cleaning the sand out of my ears," the genie replied as a huge mound of sand came pouring out of the side of his head. "Boy, I could grow a cactus in there."

Salem made a face. *What a disgusting thought.*



Salem's Tails

"Go ahead, keep talking," the genie said. "I can hear you."

Salem looked up at the genie. "I command you to send me to the rabbit hole!" he demanded.

"Coming right up!" the genie replied. He folded his arms and blinked. Suddenly, Salem found himself in the middle of a snowdrift. Icebergs floated all around him. The sky was dark and clear.

"Wh-wh-where am I?" Salem asked through chattering teeth.

"At the North Pole, just like you wanted," the genie replied.

"I said rabbit hole, not North Pole, you moron!" Salem shouted at the genie.

"All right. All right. You don't have to be so nasty. I'll try again," the genie replied. Once again, he folded his arms and blinked.

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"Whoa!" Salem cried as he skidded across some ice. He looked up to discover an entire hockey team skating in his direction. One of the players reached back with his stick and shot the hockey puck right in Salem's direction.

"Genie! I said rabbit hole, not hockey goal!" Salem cried out as the thick, black, rubber puck sped in his direction.

"Oops! Sorry," the genie replied. He quickly blinked Salem out of harm's way and back to the desert.

"Well, that was fun," the genie said. "But I gotta be on my way. Nice to meet you, cat."

Salem stared at him. "What do you mean, *cat*? What happened to *master*?" he demanded. "And what happened to the two wishes that I have left?"



Salem's Tails

"You used them up going to the North Pole and into that hockey goal," the genie explained. "If you ask me, those were real wastes of wishes."

Salem could feel the fur rising on his back. He was getting annoyed. He hopped up on the genie's shoulder and flexed his claws. "You're not going anywhere!" he told the genie. "I didn't wish for those things. You made mistakes. If you don't grant me my wish now, I'll report you to the Genies' Union. I know those guys. They're even meaner than the Witches' Council. If you thought it was cramped in that bottle, wait until they find you a new home—in a test tube!"

The genie gulped. "All right, you win. I'll give you one last wish. Now, where did you say you wanted to go?"

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Salem put his mouth right up against the genie's ear. "I WANT TO GO TO THE RABBIT HOLE!" he screamed.

"Well, why didn't you say so?" the genie demanded. He folded his arms and blinked again.



Chapter 7

Salem was afraid to open his eyes. If the genie had made another mistake, Salem could be anywhere. And that would make it harder than ever for him to get back to that rabbit hole.

Finally Salem took a deep breath and slowly opened up his green eyes. Bravely, the black cat looked around.

"Well, it's about time!" Salem exclaimed. "He finally got it right." Salem immediately recognized the giant mush-

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rooms, the towering sunflowers, and the painted red roses. He was back in Wonderland. And if he wasn't mistaken, over there, behind the shrubs, was the rabbit hole. Salem was almost home.

Quickly, Salem raced in the direction of the rabbit hole. A young boy walked in front of him, blocking his path.

"Excuse me," Salem said. "I'm in a hurry to . . ."

But Salem never finished what he was saying. His mouth was stuck wide open with amazement. In his arms, the boy was carrying a goose. But not just an ordinary goose. This was Salem's favorite kind of goose—a *golden* goose.

"That goose must be worth a fortune!" Salem exclaimed. "If I could have just one of its feathers I'd be a millionaire!"

The thought of all that money was so



Salem's Tails

overwhelming that Salem completely forgot about the rabbit hole and going home. He didn't even wonder if the goose's tail would still be gold if it were taken out of the story. All Salem could think about was the golden goose, and what he could do with all that money.

I'm sure the goose wouldn't miss just one of its tail feathers, Salem thought to himself. Then he reached out his paw and tried to pluck a feather from the goose's rear end.

"Hey! What's going on here!" Salem shrieked in fright. He tried to shake his paw loose from the goose, but he couldn't. Salem was stuck to the golden goose!

"Squawk," the goose yelped as Salem tried to yank his paw free. "Squawk, squawk."

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But Salem didn't care about the golden goose's discomfort. He just wanted to be free.

The boy turned around and tried to grab the goose from Salem's grip. "What are you trying to do? Let go of my goose! I want to bring it to the palace. The first person to make the princess smile will win her hand in marriage. I think seeing a golden goose will make her smile."

It sure made me smile, Salem thought to himself.

Just then, Salem felt two sweaty hands on his tail. "Get away from that goose," a miller's wife shouted from behind him. "I want one of those feathers. What use is gold to a cat, anyway?"

Salem sighed. *If you only knew*, he thought. But he said nothing. He remembered how confused and scared the



Salem's Tails

girl spinning the gold had been when he had first spoken to her.

"Help! I'm stuck to this cat!" the miller's wife cried out.

"Let go of my goose, I say!" the boy shouted at Salem.

Salem's small body bounced back and forth as the woman tried to let go of her grip on his tail, and the boy tried to free his goose from Salem's paw. Salem was beginning to feel a lot like a rope in the middle of a tug of war.

"Don't worry, I'll save you!" the miller told his wife. He ran and grabbed on to her waist. He tugged and tugged, but the miller's wife could not let go of Salem. She was stuck to the cat like glue. And her husband was now stuck to her.

"Oh no!" the miller shouted. "I can't shake myself loose either."

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Finally, the boy gave up waiting for the cat, the miller's wife, and the miller to let go of his golden goose. He began walking toward the palace, dragging them all behind him.

A woodcutter happened by. He saw the miller attached to his wife. He saw the miller's wife attached to a cat. And he saw the cat attached to the golden goose. "Don't worry," the woodcutter told the boy. "I can use my ax to cut you free."

"Do it quickly," the boy said.

Salem began to shake nervously. *This isn't good*, he thought. *I might come out of this tale, without my tail.*

"Help! Get me out of here!" Salem shouted frantically. "Sabrina, Hilda, Zelda, anyone! GET ME OUT OF HERE!"



Chapter 8

Salem was still yelling when Sabrina opened the front door of her house. She looked around the room in disgust. There were melted ice cream cones, candy wrappers, and spilled milk all over the floor. Two of Sabrina's favorite blouses had been cut up to make dresses for Ally's dolls, and the TV and stereo were both blaring. Obviously Ally did not need magic to destroy a house.

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Sabrina looked around the room for Ally, but she was nowhere to be seen. Her trail of trash, however, seemed to be leading upstairs. Sabrina was afraid to wonder what she might find up there. Before she could find out, she heard Salem's voice screaming out over the music.

"Salem? Where are you?" Sabrina demanded.

"Sabrina? Is that you? I'm down here. In the book!"

Sabrina looked down on the floor. The book was lying face up and open on the floor. Sabrina was mad. Ally had not taken very good care of her book. It looked as though the girl had been walking on it. The pages were crumpled and folded on top of one another, so that the corner of



Salem's Tails

The Golden Goose was overlapping a page of *Alice in Wonderland*. That explained how Salem wound up meeting the boy with the golden goose in the middle of Wonderland. Sabrina would have to talk to Ally about being careful with other people's things. Right now, though, Sabrina had to pop into the book and rescue Salem from the woodcutter's ax.

"Was grabbing the golden goose another get-rich-quick scheme?" Sabrina asked Salem as she landed beside him inside the magic book.

"No lectures, please," Salem begged her. "They're about to cut off my tail. Just get me out of here."

Sabrina nodded. She waved her

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finger, and Salem was able to yank his hand free from the goose's tail feather. He fell backwards, knocking over the miller's wife as he fell. The miller's wife fell backward onto the miller. The miller fell on the woodsman. They looked like a bunch of fairy tale dominoes. But they were free.

"You know, this is all your fault," Salem told Sabrina. "If you hadn't left me alone with Ally, I wouldn't have fallen into this book."

Before Sabrina could argue, a white rabbit carrying a gold pocket watch went hopping by. He looked at his watch and frowned. "Oh dear, oh dear!" he moaned. "It's almost time for the Mad Hatter's tea party. I'm so very, very late. I must hurry."



Salem's Tails

Sabrina scooped up Salem in her arms and ran for the rabbit hole. "We have to hurry, too, Salem. Who knows what new kinds of trouble Ally is causing while we're here!"



Chapter 9

Ally was sitting on the couch waiting when Sabrina and Salem popped their way back into the living room. She had her arms folded angrily across her chest, and there was a determined look on her face.

"Some fun baby-sitter you are. You leave me with a cat who runs off. I spent the whole night alone. It was so boring!" Ally told Sabrina.

"It doesn't look like you were bored,"



Salem's Tails

Sabrina disagreed. "It looks like you were really busy—making a giant mess."

"Big deal," Ally replied. "You can clean it up with one wave of your finger."

Sabrina nodded. "I could. But I'm not going to. You are going to clean up this mess—with your two mortal hands!"

"No I'm not. And if you try to make me do it, I'll . . . I'll . . ."

"You'll what?" Sabrina asked. "You can't do anything to me anymore."

"Maybe I don't have my magic powers," Ally declared, "but I still have my mouth."

"Does she ever!" Salem whispered to Sabrina.

Ally ignored the cat. "I can tell your

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aunts what you did. They won't like it that you left me all alone."

"I didn't leave you all alone. I left you with Salem," Sabrina argued.

"Well, he left me alone, then," Ally said.

"I didn't leave you," Salem said. "You threw me into that book."

"I did not," Ally lied solemnly. "You saw a chance to get some gold and you went for it."

"What are you talking about?" Salem demanded.

"Come on. I saw you grab that ball of golden yarn in your mouth. And Sabrina caught you holding the tail end of the golden goose."

"But you're the one who put me in the book to begin with," Salem insisted.

"I did not," Ally told Sabrina.



Salem's Tails

Sabrina looked her younger cousin in the eye. "Forget it, kid. I'm not buying anything you say. I know that you and your sister will do just about anything to get your way."

"Well, you're the one who is in trouble, Sabrina, not me. You left me alone here with a cat. It was *your* job to babysit me. And unless you do what I say, I'm telling." Ally smiled victoriously.

"Okay, you win," Sabrina said, surrendering. "So what do you want?"

Ally again smiled victoriously. "First, I want another tea party. And this time, I don't want just cookies. I want a whole cake—vanilla, with chocolate icing, and those little rainbow sprinkles, too."

"Uh, Sabrina, I know where there's a fantastic tea party going on right now.

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Everyone's just *mad* about it!" Salem interrupted.

"Really? Where?" Sabrina asked.

Salem sighed. "Do I have to spell everything out for you?" he asked Sabrina, using his paw to point at the fairy tale book. "Remember the White Rabbit?"

Sabrina nodded and winked at Salem. "Ally, Salem's right. There's a great tea party going on in Wonderland right now. If we slide down the rabbit hole, we can still make it."

"Oooo! A slide!" Ally cheered. "I love slides. I get to go first."

"By all means!" Salem agreed.

Ally raced over to the book. She bent her legs, and leaped onto the page.

"Wheee!" she cried out as she slid down the hole.



Salem's Tails

"See ya later, kid!" Salem laughed. He looked down at the page. Ally was already in the book. She waved her hand up at them.

"Are you coming or what?" Ally called up to Salem and Sabrina. "Hurry up. I don't want to be late for the party."

"We'll be down in a minute," Salem told her.

Just then a familiar face appeared on the page. It was the Queen of Hearts. The minute the Queen spotted Ally, she started shouting.

"Off with her head!" demanded the Queen. "Off with her head!"

Ally started running.

"I'll go in there and rescue her," Sabrina said, "as soon as I finish cleaning up this mess she made."

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Salem smiled. That could take a while. He turned and called down to Ally. "Quick, jump over that hedge and keep on going."

Ally did as she was told. She leaped up over the shrubs to safety. As she ran off, Salem called after her. "When you get to Arabia, don't forget to say hello to the genie for me."



Cat Care Tips

- #1 Cats need lots of love and play time, but they also need time to be by themselves. Your cat will let you know when it wants to play.
- #2 Some cats are naturally shy and do not like strangers. Other cats are naturally outgoing and are affectionate toward everyone. Never try to force a shy cat to be around people it does not know—that would be too stressful.
- #3 Some cats will become less shy as they get older.

—Laura E. Smiley, MS, DVM, Dipl. ACVIM
Gwynedd Veterinary Hospital

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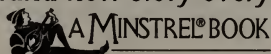
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As a child, Nancy Krulik loved to read. Her favorite stories were fairy tales—but you probably already guessed that! Today, Nancy writes stories for others to read. She's the author of more than 100 books for children and young adults.



Nancy has a secret you can't tell Salem—she's allergic to cats! But that doesn't mean she can't have pets. Nancy has a guinea pig named Tutankhamen who keeps her company while she's home writing. Nancy lives in Manhattan with her husband, composer Daniel Burwasser, and their two children, who never miss an episode of *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch*.

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At first, Ally seems unusually well-behaved. Salem even offers to read to her from a book of fairy tales—it seems like a safe enough activity. Until Salem finds himself **inside** the book, starring as the newest character in all of his favorite stories.

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Published by
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RL: 2
007-010
Printed in U.S.A.

ISBN 0-671-03832-X



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